



After The Fire . . .

Your Survival Guide

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department
4100 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, Virginia 22030
(703) 246-3801

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Strategic Vision

The *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* will become the national model for providing responsive, quality emergency and preventive services. Effectively serving the public remains our highest priority. We will always value our personnel as dedicated and compassionate professionals, who continuously strive to meet the changing needs of our community. We will actively participate in community life and, by example, serve as leaders and role models.

The tragedy and destruction of a fire does not end when the flames are extinguished. *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* firefighters and paramedics respond to fires each year where victims are in a state of confusion, shock, and despair. The loss of property and personal belongings, especially family keepsakes, is painful and traumatic. The clean-up process from smoke damage is often long and overwhelming for the average citizen.

This pamphlet is designed to assist you in dealing with your loss. Please take this opportunity to carefully read the information provided. If you still have questions or need further assistance, call the *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* at (703) 246-3801 or TTY (703) 385-4419 and we will be glad to help you. Our department has a caring and ready staff who want to assist you in your time of need.

Introduction

We always strive to provide you, our customer, the best possible service.

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department

The *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* is committed to providing you with the best service. To help us serve you even better, please take a moment to tell us about our service, attitude, and responsiveness. Please help us by completing the self-addressed post card located on the back cover.

YOUR THOUGHTS AND COMMENTS DO MAKE A DIFFERENCE.

Citizens often ask why broken windows, doors or holes in the roof are necessary when fighting a fire. Fires produce smoke, hot gases, and temperatures that rise to more than 1,200 degrees Fahrenheit. Often, it is necessary to eliminate heat, smoke, and hot gases before firefighters can enter a building to extinguish a fire. Ventilation must be done quickly to help reduce fire spread. Most often, walls must be forcibly opened to find hidden fires and to allow firefighters to visibly ensure the fire is completely out. Without the use of this firefighting technique, a building could suffer total destruction by fire.

After the firefighters depart, your home again becomes your responsibility. **You are responsible for securing doors, windows, and other areas against unauthorized entry and for ensuring no further damage occurs to the structure or contents.** Fairfax County Building Inspectors may be notified by fire department officials to determine the structural stability of your home. They can be contacted at (703) 324-1980.

After the Fire is Out

If You Cannot Live in Your Home . . .

Individuals who have experienced a fire and cannot reoccupy their home may choose to stay with family or friends. Consult your insurance company to see if you are covered for additional living expenses. A representative from *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* will assist you in contacting agencies that will help provide needed assistance. If you need emergency assistance for food, clothing, or lodging, contact:

American Red Cross	(202) 728-6401
Fairfax County Human Services	(703) 324-5630
Salvation Army (8 a.m. - 4 p.m.)	(703) 385-8700
Divisional Headquarters (24 hour)	(202) 783-9085

Counseling Support . . .

After a fire, you may experience depression, difficulty concentrating, anxiety, sadness, anger, fatigue, and nightmares. These are common and normal responses to a traumatic event. If you or your family need support, call the American Red Cross Central Fairfax Branch at (703) 876-0712. Some employers and health insurance carriers provide coverage for counseling services.

Take Valuables With You . . .

If you must temporarily leave your home, take with you: legal documents, identification, medicines, eye glasses, hearing aids, valuables, credit cards, checkbooks, insurance policies, cash, jewelry, photos, and other items that cannot be replaced. (Note: Let a safe cool down before opening.) Should firefighters be on the scene, they will accompany and assist you.

Reminders . . .

If you have to move, notify the Post Office of your new address and request a moving kit. If you are in temporary housing, consider having the Post Office hold your mail until permanent housing arrangements can be made. Other places you may need to contact are shown below:

- | | |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Financial institutions | <input type="checkbox"/> Social Security Administration at 1-800-772-1213 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Credit card companies | <input type="checkbox"/> Utility companies (water, electric, gas, cable, and telephone) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> School district | |

If You Cannot Stay In Your Home

Utilities . . .

The Fire and Rescue Department may have utility services shut off or may disconnect service as a safety precaution to prevent further damage to your home and your personal belongings. The procedure for re-establishing various utility services are provided below:

Natural Gas

DO NOT turn the gas back on! A natural gas company representative is available 24-hours-a-day to turn on your gas and relight appliances.

Washington Gas	1-800-752-7520 (703) 750-1000 TTY: (703) 750-7975
Columbia Gas	1-800-543-8911

Electricity

An electrical inspector must check the wiring throughout your home to ensure it is safe before the power can be reconnected.

Northern Virginia Electric Cooperative	1-877-330-2853
Virginia Power	1-888-667-3000 Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 7 p.m.; Saturday 9 a.m. - 3 p.m.

Water

This service may be turned back on by you. **Be careful. The fire may have damaged the plumbing** and water damage may occur when the pipes are filled with water.

Fairfax County Water Authority	(703) 698-5800
Falls Church Water Department	(703) 248-5071
Fairfax City Water Department	(703) 385-7915
Vienna Water Department	(703) 255-6385
Herndon Water Department	(703) 435-6814

Telephone

Verizon	1-800-483-4200 (703)954-6222
Repair	1-800-275-2355 Monday - Friday 7 a.m. - 9 p.m.

Utilities

Property Insurance . . .

If you own or are purchasing your property, contact your insurance company and agent as soon as possible. If you are renting or leasing the property, you also must contact the owner. Your insurance agent will provide details on claims processing and other insurance-related questions. A list of insurance companies and their toll free numbers is provided for your use.

Note: All items in the building should be inventoried and no item should be thrown away without the approval of the insurance company.

Your duties after a fire loss

- Immediately notify insurance company of loss
- Protect property from further damage by making reasonable repairs such as covering holes and broken windows
- Inventory damaged personal property in detail; include any bills or documents which can help establish its value and age
- Cooperate with the insurance adjuster
- Submit a formal statement of loss in a timely manner
- Notify your mortgage company of the fire and keep them informed of restoration efforts

Insurance Companies . . .

Allstate Insurance Co.	1-800-326-0950	Pacific Indemnity Co.	1-800-362-4822
Armed Forces Insurance Exchange	1-800-255-6792	Phoenix Insurance Co.	1-800-445-6256
Auto Insurance Co. of Hartford	1-800-423-0033	Prudential P & C Insurance Co.	1-800-437-3535
Erie Insurance Exchange	1-800-322-3743	Royal Indemnity Co.	1-800-847-6925
Farmers Insurance Exchange	1-800-347-1131	Safeco Insurance Co. of America ..	1-800-332-3226
Federal Insurance Co.	1-800-362-4822	St. Paul Guardian Insurance Co.	1-800-787-2851
Greater Northern Insurance Co.	1-800-362-4822	Southern Insurance Co. of VA	1-800-468-1127
Hartford of the Midwest	1-800-243-5860	State Farm F & C Insurance	(703) 218-0400
Horace Mann Insurance Co.	1-800-777-9367	Travelers Indemnity Co.	1-800-252-4633
Liberty Mutual Fire Insurance Co. .	1-800-746-7421	Union Insurance Co.	1-800-456-7688
Metropolitan P & C Ins. (Metlife) ...	1-800-854-6011	USAA Insurance Co.	1-800-531-8222
Montgomery Mutual Insurance Co.	1-800-638-8933	Vigilant Insurance Co.	1-800-362-4822
Nationwide Mutual Fire Insurance .	1-800-421-3535	Virginia Farm Bureau Fire & Cas..	1-800-447-8323

24-Hour Toll Free Numbers

Property Insurance

Requesting a Fire Report . . .

To obtain copies of your *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* incident report, please write to the following address:

Attn: Incident Reports
Data and Information Section
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department
4100 Chain Bridge Road
Fairfax, VA 22030

The request should include the location of the incident, the type of incident (i.e., house fire, vehicle fire), the date and approximate time of the incident, your work and a day-time phone number. A non-refundable processing payment of \$5 for each report must be submitted with your request. Checks must be made out to the County of Fairfax.

Please allow at least one week upon receipt of your request for processing. Reports also can be picked up at the Massey Building, 4100 Chain Bridge Road or mailed to you. Please call (703) 246-3992 to confirm the availability of the report.

Vehicle Fires . . .

Contact your insurance agent who will explain your coverage and will assist you with your claim. A list of insurance companies and their toll free numbers is provided in the Property Insurance Section. If your vehicle is damaged in a structure fire, contact both your home insurance and automobile insurance agents.

If you are not insured and the vehicle is repairable, a list of repair facilities can be obtained from the yellow pages of your phone directory under automobile repairing and service.

If towing is required, refer to the yellow pages of your phone directory, under automobile road service. For 24-hour emergency road service for AAA members, call (703) 222-5000 or 1-800-763-5500.

If your vehicle is a total loss, it may still have some value. A list of vehicle salvage companies can be obtained in the yellow pages of your phone directory under automobile salvage. You may also want to donate your vehicle to a local charity.

Public Transportation . . .

Fairfax Connector	(703) 339-7200	TTY (703) 339-1608
Metro	(202) 637-7000	TTY (202) 638-3780
Metro Access	(301) 562-5360	TTY (301) 588-8186
FASTRAN	(703) 222-9764	TTY (703) 324-7079
Virginia Railway Express	(703) 684-0400	TTY (703) 684-0551

Incident Reports/Vehicle Fires

Emergency Telephone Numbers . . .

Fire and Ambulance	911 (Voice/TTY)
Police, to report a crime in progress or accident	911 (Voice/TTY)
Non-Emergencies	(703) 691-2131
	TTY (703) 204-2264
Poison Control	(202) 625-3333
	TTY (202) 362-8563
Flooding	(703) 691-2131
Sanitary Sewer Line breaks or emergencies	(703) 323-1211
	TTY (703) 239-8498

In the event of a natural disaster or other major area-wide emergency, tune in to Fairfax County Cable Television Channel 16.

General County Information . . .

Assistance for persons with hearing impairments	1-800-828-1120 (TTY/VA Relay Center)
Citizens Assistance	(703) 324-3185
	TTY (703) 324-2935
Fairfax County Home Page	http://www.co.fairfax.va.us
Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Home Page	http://www.co.fairfax.va.us/fire
24-Hour Recorded Information (via touch-tone phone)	(703) 324-INFO

Frequently Called Numbers . . .

Air Quality & Chemical Hazards	(703) 246-2300
Animal	
Animal Control	(703) 830-3310
Animal Shelter	(703) 830-1100
Dog Licenses	(703) 222-8234
Building & Construction	
Permits	(703) 222-0801
Inspection Requests	(703) 222-0455
Home Occupation Permits	(703) 222-1082
Children	
Child Abuse Complaints	(703) 324-7400
	TTY (703) 222-9452
Child Care Information	(703) 449-9555
	TTY (703) 324-3923
SACC Information	(703) 449-1414
Decals (county vehicle sticker)	(703) 222-8234
Department of Motor Vehicles (DMV)*	1-866-368-5463
	TTY 1-800-272-9268
Fire & Rescue Department	(703) 246-2126
	TTY (703) 385-4419
Health Information	(703) 246-2411
	TTY (703) 591-6435
Housing	(703) 246-5010
	TTY (703) 385-3578
Human Services Access/Coordinated	
Services Planning	(703) 222-0880
	TTY (703) 803-7914
Information (General County)	(703) 324-3185
	TTY (703) 324-2935
Land Records/Deeds	(703) 691-7320
Marriage Licenses	(703) 691-7320
Mental Retardation Services	(703) 324-4400
	TTY (703) 324-4495
Operator (County)	(703) 324-2000
Passports	(703) 691-7320

Police (non-Emergency)	(703) 691-2131
	TTY (703) 204-2264
Public Affairs	(703) 324-3187
	TTY (703) 324-2935
Public Assistance	(703) 324-7500
	TTY (703) 222-9452
Public Works	(703) 324-5033
Emergency (24-Hours)	(703) 323-1211
Sanitary Sewers	(703) 324-5015
Storm Drainage-Flooding	(703) 934-2800
School Information	(703) 246-2502
Senior Citizen Information	(703) 324-5411
	TTY (703) 449-1186
Social Security*	1-800-772-1213
Social Services	(703) 324-7500
	TTY (703) 222-9452
Tax Information (county)	(703) 222-8234
	TTY (703) 222-7594
Tenant-Landlord Commission	(703) 222-8435
	TTY (703) 222-8653
Transportation	(703) 324-1100
	TTY (703) 324-1102
Trash (county)	
Collection	(703) 802-3322
Household Hazardous Waste	(703) 324-5068
I-66 Transfer Station	(703) 631-1179
I-95 Landfill	(703) 690-1703
Vital Records (death certificates, etc.)	(703) 246-7122
	TTY (703) 591-6435
Voting Information	(703) 222-0776
Recorded Information	(703) 324-4700
Water Authority	(703) 698-5800
	TTY (703) 698-7025
Wills, Probate	(703) 691-7320

*Denotes a state or federal agency.

Telephone Numbers

General Information/Cleaning Up . . .

Pets

Smoke can damage the lungs of a dog or cat in minutes and sparks can cause painful burns that may stay hidden under your pet's fur if not located and treated. As soon as possible, take your pet to a veterinarian. If your pet is missing, call the Fairfax County Animal Shelter at (703) 830-1100.

Damaged Monies or Negotiables

If paper currency is burned, handle with extreme care. Place each bill in plastic wrap for preservation. To reclaim paper currency and coins, ask your local financial institution for advice regarding replacement. If your U.S. Savings Bonds have been damaged or destroyed, write to the U.S. Treasury Department Bureau of Public Debt, Division of Loans and Currency, 537 South Clark Street, Chicago, Illinois 60605, Attn: Bond Consultant. Include name(s) and address(es) on bonds, approximate date or time period when purchased, denominations, and number of each.

Food Management

Any food, beverages and/or medicines exposed to heat or smoke should not be consumed. Exposure to heat may alter the potency of medication. Check with your doctor or pharmacist before taking these medicines. If food was in tightly closed or sealed containers, or in an airtight refrigerator or freezer, it may be salvageable. It is safer to replace items than to take an unnecessary risk to your health. **IF IN DOUBT, THROW IT OUT!**

Cleaning Tips

Residual smoke odor that remains following a small fire is an annoyance. Placing small saucers of household vanilla, vinegar, baking soda, or activated charcoal around your home will absorb these odors. Remember, the smoke odor also will be inside your heating and cooling ductwork which will need to be cleaned before it is used.

A janitorial supply or cleaning service specializing in restoration of fire damaged property should be contacted to assist you in cleaning ducts and deodorizing your home.

General Cleaning Hints

Here are some hints you may want to consider if you decide to clean your own home:

- Change and clean air conditioner/heater filters.
- Vacuum all surfaces
- Seal off the room in which you are working with plastic to keep soot and dust from moving from one location to another. Try to keep windows closed.

Painted Walls

To remove soot and smoke from walls, mix together 4 to 6 tablespoons tri-sodium phosphate (TSP) and 1 gallon of water. Use rubber gloves and eye protection when working with this solution.

Floors

Clean all hard surface floors with an appropriate soap solution. Unless these surfaces are "pre-finished" or "no-wax" strip and wax them. Determine if water has been trapped between flooring and subfloor. This can cause odors and deteriorate both surfaces.

Books

Books can be dried by placing them on end, separating the pages and letting them air dry. You also may separate pages and place unmarked dry paper between the pages and press together to prevent crinkling or distorting. If the books are very wet, air dry until they are only damp, then sprinkle cornstarch between the pages. Wipe with a dry cloth and press together.

General Information/Cleaning Up

A Word About Smoke Alarms. . .

Smoke Alarms are Required by Law

Virginia Uniform Statewide Building Code (VUSBC), Section 61-4-2, requires smoke alarms in all homes and residential buildings with one or more dwelling units, including single-family homes, highrise apartments, and condominiums, must have smoke alarms outside sleeping areas and in the basement.

Rental Units

The ordinance requires the owner of the dwelling, or the owner’s agent, to maintain the smoke alarms in good working order. The tenant is responsible for reasonable care (including changing the battery) and for interim testing of all alarms.

Maintenance and Testing

Routine maintenance includes vacuuming, testing, and changing the battery. *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* recommends testing and vacuuming your smoke alarms monthly. All batteries should be replaced annually. When setting your clocks back from daylight saving time, change your batteries in your smoke alarms. Smoke alarms do not last forever. Therefore, it is a good idea to replace any smoke alarm that is more than ten (10) years old.

For more information about smoke alarms or home escape planning, contact *Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department* at (703) 246-3801 or TTY (703) 385-4419.

Note: Through fire and rescue department outreach programs, smoke alarms and batteries will be provided to county residents upon request. Call the Public Information and Life Safety Education Section at (703) 246-3801, (703) 246-3947 or TTY (703) 385-4419.

Carbon Monoxide Alarms . . .

Homes that contain appliances such as furnaces and water heaters that burn oil, propane or natural gas; fireplaces and woodstoves; space heaters that run on fuel; gas ranges and ovens or gas dryers all should have carbon monoxide alarms.

Carbon monoxide is an odorless, colorless gas produced by burning fuel. A carbon monoxide alarm will provide you with early warning when carbon monoxide levels are approaching a dangerous level. For more information, call the Public Information and Life Safety Education Section at (703) 246-3801 or TTY (703) 385-4419.

July 2001

How Did The Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department Treat You?

Please take a moment to fill out this comment card so that we may improve our services. Circle the appropriate responses and provide comments as needed. Thank you.

	Poor	Marginal	Satisfactory	Good	Excellent	
911 operator	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Our response time	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Fire suppression	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Medical treatment	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Other service	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Specify: _____						
Performed jobs efficiently	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Communicated clearly	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Answered questions	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Anticipated needs	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Took special care of you	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Were enthusiastic about their jobs	P	M	S	G	E	N/A
Overall service	P	M	S	G	E	N/A

Comments: _____

NO POSTAGE
NECESSARY
IF MAILED
IN THE
UNITED STATES

BUSINESS REPLY MAIL

FIRST-CLASS MAIL

PERMIT NO 4897

FAIRFAX, VA

POSTAGE WILL BE PAID BY ADDRESSEE

FIRE CHIEF

Fairfax County Fire and Rescue Department

4100 Chain Bridge Road

Fairfax, VA 22030